

KAREN HOBERT FLYNN**President of Common Cause**

Karen Hobert Flynn has been a democracy reform activist and leader for more than three decades, including 28-plus years in state and national leadership positions with Common Cause. Karen is the organization's tenth president.

Since becoming president in June 2016, she has expanded the organization and led it through one of the most turbulent times our democracy has faced. Karen's leadership resulted in unprecedented growth for Common Cause. In her first two years, members and supporters doubled, from 600,000 to more than 1.2 million.

Just five months into her presidency, Donald Trump was elected president and began an unprecedented approach to governing that challenged ethical considerations, civic institutions, the media, and where threats to democracy's survival came from inside and outside the country.

In response, Karen led Common Cause back to its roots, to the core programs that distinguish the nearly 50-year old advocacy group which rose to prominence in the Watergate era. Karen focused first on the values of fairness and openness that drew people to Common Cause as she directed staff to innovate, grow, and use modern advocacy tools and tactics to hold the executive branch accountable for its unprecedented ethics violations.

At the same time, Karen prioritized Common Cause's vision for a more inclusive and representative democracy and worked strategically to strengthen democracy through numerous legal, ballot, and legislative victories at the state level on redistricting, campaign finance, voting rights and security, and ethics.

Before becoming president, Karen served as Common Cause's Senior Vice President for Programs and Strategy from 2012-2016. In this position, she led the program and development of Common Cause. She oversaw the strategy and planning for the organization and raised significant resources to support Common Cause's national and state efforts to curb the influence of big money in politics and to



protect voting rights. She launched Common Cause's campaign to expose and stop the dangerous movement in the states for a constitutional convention that would jeopardize every constitutional right or protection currently available to Americans. She oversaw a dramatic expansion of Common Cause's digital presence, more than doubling the number of supporters. From 2013-2014 Karen served as interim-president of Common Cause after the sudden passing of Common Cause president Bob Edgar, guiding the organization through an unexpected transition.

As Vice President of States from 2007 - 2012, Karen expanded Common Cause to include Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, Oregon, Ohio, Florida, Vermont, and Hawaii.

Under her leadership of Common Cause in Connecticut Karen secured one of the strongest state campaign finance laws in the country, including a comprehensive small-dollar public financing grants program for statewide and legislative offices, banning state contractor political giving, and strict limits

on political giving by lobbyists. She helped pass numerous ethics laws, including a gift-and-meal limit bill, a promotional advertising limit bill, and strong disclosure and coordination measures.

Karen writes and speaks frequently on issues regarding our democracy, including money in politics, redistricting, voting rights, and ethics for elected officials. She has had op-eds published in *USA Today*, *The Washington Post*, *Reuters*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *The*

Daily Beast, *The Hill*, *Newsweek*, *Salon*, *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *The Hartford Courant*, and *The Connecticut Mirror*.

